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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/027,681	12/21/2001	T. Daniel Gross	033297-120	2036

7590 12/08/2003

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EXAMINER

ROBERTS, PAUL A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3731

DATE MAILED: 12/08/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/027,681

Applicant(s)

GROSS ET AL.

Examiner

Paul A Roberts

Art Unit

3731

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 October 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 8-20 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 2 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3-7 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election with traverse of claims 1-20 in Paper No. 9 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the method of claim 8 cannot be performed on any device other than the device of claim 1. This is not found persuasive because many devices exist that can be used with the method of claim 8. Additionally, there are alternate uses for the device of claim 1. The incorporation of the groove and an opening in a suture trimmer does not require the same search for claims 1, 8, or 12. Claims 1, 8, and 12 claim patentably distinct inventions and the requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claim Objections

Claim 5 is objected to because of the following informalities: line 3 delete – ‘portion’ – insert – ‘edge’. Line 3, insert – ‘the’ - between – ‘sever suture’. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim 7 requires an ‘a’ before the word ‘suture’.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Sauer et al. 5,520,702. Sauer et al. (Sauer) discloses a suture trimmer (device is capable of trimming sutures) comprising a shaft (302) which extends to the distal end of the device. The groove is element 263 and the opening is the hole near element 62 (see figure 14). The suture retainer (48) and cutter (52) are slideable within the shaft (figure 10). A handle is disclosed adjacent to the proximal end of the shaft.

Double Patenting

Claims 1 and 2 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-2 of copending Application No. 10/324,730. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other.

Application 10/027,681

Application 10/324,730

Claim:

1	=	1, 2
2	=	1, 12, 15

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

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US 3372477 A	C.B Hoppe	Surgical suture extractor
US 3328876 A	C.B Hoppe	Surgical suture extractor
US 4246698 A	Lasner, Jeffrey I. et al.	Suture remover
US 4369787 A	Lasner, Jeffrey I. et al.	Method of cutting a suture
US 4527331 A	Lasner, J I	Suture cutter and remover
US 5176695 A	Dulebohn, David H.	Surgical cutting means
US 5304190 A	Reckelhoff, Jerome E. et al.	Endoscopic cutting apparatus
US 5565122 A	Zinnbauer, Gerald et al.	Suture cutting
US 5704943 A	Yoon et al.	Suture knot tier
US 5797928 A	Kogasaka	Ligator apparatus
US 5797929 A	Andreas et al.	Knot pusher
US 6007554 A	Van Ess, Lester Jay	Surgical cutter
US 6051004 A	Gill, Darrell	Needle holder and suture cutter

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul A Roberts whose telephone number is (703) 305-7558. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael J Milano can be reached on 703-308-2496. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858.

Paul Roberts
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17/11/03


MICHAEL J. MILANO
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700